

# Operations Management Plan

2023

## Introduction

The Operations Management Plan (OMP) has long been an integral part of York House School's (YHS) relationship with the surrounding community. This latest version of the OMP in 2023 updates guidelines for communication between YHS and its neighbours.

It references the City of Vancouver's approval in January 2018 of a rezoning application for the YHS site at 4176 Alexandra Street. It includes details about recent initiatives and some future plans for continuing to manage transportation and facilities use.

The original OMP was drafted by York House School and the Neighbour Relations committee in early 2005, when it was known as the Good Neighbour Pledge. It was first updated in 2010. As part of a 2016-17 rezoning application to the City of Vancouver, it was updated again in November 2017. This provided a framework for how YHS manages its operations and, in particular, how it relates to the surrounding community, communicates effectively with its neighbours, and resolves issues. It included guidelines for communication, as well as transportation management and facilities use plans, and provided a mechanism for regular review.

## Purpose and Objective of the OMP

The purpose and objective of this OMP is to provide a framework for YHS to work with its neighbours to pursue common goals. These include providing open and effective communication, promoting good neighbour practices, minimising impacts on the neighbourhood, fostering safety in the neighbourhood, and reflecting and respecting the objectives of the City of Vancouver, our neighbours and YHS.

## History and Area Context

YHS was founded in 1932 and has been in its current location since 1939. It sits at 4176 Alexandra Street in Vancouver's Shaughnessy area, next to Little Flower Academy (founded in 1928) and Shaughnessy Elementary (founded in 1920). For years, these schools have been an integral part of the character of this neighbourhood.

In this OMP, the neighbourhood area is defined in the north by Balfour Avenue, in the south by West 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue, in the west by Pine Crescent and in the east by Hudson Street. This is a residential area, which includes the three schools as well as two churches and a park. Many resident homeowners and their families have lived in the area for several decades while, each year, new homeowners move into the area. The school and the residents share a desire to manage the character of the neighbourhood as well as its growth.

**Guidelines for Communications: YHS pledges to inform the neighbours in advance of events and long-term plans; facilitate a process where issues that arise can be identified and discussed; provide a mechanism by which documents can be reviewed annually or as needed; and, provide opportunities for dialogue between the school and its neighbours.**

1. **\*\*YHS Neighbour Liaison** -- Neighbours are encouraged to contact the YHS Neighbour Liaison on an individual basis with any questions or concerns regarding the school's operations. **Kelly Walker Schobel, Director of Communications & Marketing**, can be reached at [kwalkerschobel@yorkhouse.ca](mailto:kwalkerschobel@yorkhouse.ca). Her details will be posted on the school's website on the Neighbour Relations website at <https://www.yorkhouse.ca/explore/neighbour-relations>

The Neighbour Liaison will receive, record and respond to the neighbours' concerns as soon as possible or within two school days. All neighbours are required to provide their name, home address, email and/or daytime telephone number to the Neighbour Liaison for follow-up. A written log is kept of all calls and emails and a summary of these will be included as part of the regular review of the plan.

If the concern is regarding an illegally parked car, neighbours are encouraged to report the vehicle directly to the City of Vancouver Parking Enforcement Office (Enforcement Requests 604-257-8727) for prompt action. If the concern involves a moving vehicle, such as a vehicle that is doing an illegal u-turn or speeding, neighbours are encouraged to contact the Vancouver Police Department's non-emergency line at 604-717-3321.

2. **\*\*Regular Communication with Neighbours** -- The YHS website at [www.yorkhouse.ca](http://www.yorkhouse.ca) and its Neighbour Relations page at <https://www.yorkhouse.ca/explore/neighbour-relations> are the main communication tools used to provide ongoing information to the neighbourhood.

The Neighbour Relations page will include, but not be limited to the following information: The most updated version of the OMP, examples of school communication initiatives such as related emails and/or videos; and, a link to the main 'Calendar of

Events' for the school that is updated at the beginning of each term to ensure notification as early as possible regarding upcoming school events.

[https://yorkhouse.myschoolapp.com/ftpimages/958/download/download\\_3820948.pdf](https://yorkhouse.myschoolapp.com/ftpimages/958/download/download_3820948.pdf)

**3. \*\*Neighbour Relations Committee (NRC)** -- The purpose of the committee is to promote open and ongoing communication between area residents and YHS. Through committee meetings, residents will be kept informed of school initiatives and activities, and YHS will hear feedback, questions and concerns from residents. These will be reported to the YHS Board of Governors, which is responsible for the overall stewardship of YHS.

Committee meetings will be held as required, at a minimum of two times a year. Committee Members will be made up of a maximum of six residents of the neighbourhood area, members of the YHS administration and members of the YHS Board's Neighbour Committee.

Residents can, from time to time, request to attend meetings to ensure neighbourhood questions and issues are represented on the committee. The school website's Neighbour Relations page will list committee meeting dates and agenda.

**4. \*\*Resolving issues** -- The above guidelines for communications are designed to promote ongoing discussion and mutual understanding, and thus mitigate conflict.

Both YHS and neighbourhood residents are encouraged to proactively share relevant information and communicate issues through the mechanism established in this OMP.

A neighbour with a City by-law concern such as illegal parking should contact the City of Vancouver Parking Enforcement Office at 604-257-8727. A neighbour with a concern that involves a moving vehicle should contact the Vancouver Police Department's non-emergency line at 604-717-3321.

A neighbour with a YHS concern should contact the YHS Neighbour Liaison, **Kelly Walker Schobel, Director of Communications & Marketing, at [kwalkerschobel@yorkhouse.ca](mailto:kwalkerschobel@yorkhouse.ca)**. She will attempt to respond within two school days and to address the problem.

If the neighbour considers that the problem has not been adequately addressed, the Neighbour Liaison will bring the issue to the next meeting of the NRC.

In the case that a neighbour's concern or problem is brought to the NRC, the NRC will inform the neighbour, in writing, of the results of its deliberations.

## **5. \*\*Review of the Operations Management Plan**

Once a year, YHS will undertake a review of its OMP, and will make improvements to it as identified through the review and ongoing communication with neighbours through the NRC.

Changes will be reviewed with the NRC. A final, updated plan will be posted on the school's website on its Neighbour Relations page at <https://www.yorkhouse.ca/explore/neighbour-relations>

## **Neighbour Relations Committee: *Community updates, and plans ahead***

**1. \*\*YHS rezoning application approved** -- YHS received unanimous approval from the City of Vancouver on January 30, 2018, for its rezoning application for the school site at 4176 Alexandra Street. The application includes a phased master plan, amended use of the school auditorium, and the ability to increase the maximum number of students from 600 to 690. Full details can be seen on the City of Vancouver's site at <https://rezoning.vancouver.ca/applications/4176alexandrast/index.htm>

The YHS Board of Governors has reactivated its Master Planning Advisory Committee. Currently, the evolution of the school's programming presents an opportunity to revisit how spaces at the school can be used to continue enhancing learning experiences. This will be an ongoing process. While the school is focused on long-term planning, it has also successfully completed a new STEAM Lab for the Senior School without using any additional density. The lab adds significantly to the learning space for the school to prepare our students for new opportunities. It also recently upgraded its existing senior school science wing facilities.

More details and information about the school's long-term future plans can be seen at: <https://www.yorkhouse.ca/explore/yhs-2030>

**2. \*\*Transportation Management** – The YHS traffic management plan outlines and communicates guidelines for picking-up and dropping off in laybys during regular school hours so that the number of cars entering local streets is reduced and there is a clockwise manner of traffic flow around the school.

YHS works with Little Flower Academy and Shaughnessy Elementary School on a committee started specifically to address ongoing traffic management issues. A committee meets about once a year to discuss strategies.

**Traffic flow:** YHS staff, students and families are directed to follow in a clockwise direction around the school. Cars enter off Granville Street, travel west along West 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue, turn right onto Alexandra Street, and exit the neighbourhood via West King Edward Avenue. They are discouraged from turning south onto Alexandra Street to avoid entering the local streets.

The community is also discouraged from stopping in non-stopping areas. Students are encouraged to cross at crosswalk areas. Drivers are reminded not to use u-turns as a means of changing direction on West 26th Avenue and Alexandra Street or to drive through the laneway between Nanton Avenue and West 26th Avenue. There has been renewed attention on reminding drivers about the no stopping/parking parts of Nanton Street between Granville and Alexandra St. This route is a designated biking path that can become very congested.

The City has constructed a permanent pedestrian crossing on West 26th Avenue near Granville Street. This move included adding relevant signage and the removal of two parking spaces on the south side of West 26th Avenue so that cars cannot back up onto the crossing. The City also removed parking spaces further west on 26th Avenue. The School and residents agree this is not necessary and are working to communicate with the City.

The school hires contract personnel from a security firm to assist students and parents who use the West King Edward crosswalk after school at pick-up time. A school administrator handles this post at drop-off time in the morning. Parent volunteers assist students crossing and/or getting in and out of cars at the layby on West King Edward Avenue, east of Alexandra Street, and are also posted in two locations along West 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

These volunteers are reminded to stay on the sidewalk and to avoid stepping onto the street while performing their duties. Their function is not to direct the traffic, but rather to reinforce the existing street traffic signage. YHS evaluates the traffic and drop-off/pick-up environment and assesses the need for additional contract personnel on an ongoing basis.

The three schools together developed a staggered schedule for classes to start and end to reduce congestion in the area. At YHS, Grades 1 to 7 in the Junior School start at 8:25 am and end at 3:00 pm while Grades 8 to 12 in the Senior School start at 8:35 am and end at 3:15 pm. Some co-curricular activities start between 7:00 am and 8:00 am, meaning some students are at the school prior to regular start times.

In 2019, the City of Vancouver installed speed bumps on Alexandra Street between King Edward Avenue and 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue. It also added more time to the pedestrian crossing light at West King Edward Avenue. Both of these have helped improve the pace and flow of traffic from Alexandra and King Edward into the lay-by.

**Parking:** For regular events and meetings outside school hours, there are reminders about where to park. Information about traffic and parking is also posted on the Neighbour Relations section of the YHS website.

When there is a major event with an anticipated attendance that could impact the neighbourhood, attendees are given guidelines with acceptable parking areas on West King Edward, West 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Alexandra Street, and discouraged from parking on other local streets. Volunteers, staff, and security personnel are available to direct cars to appropriate parking areas.

Junior School parents who walk their children into the school are asked to respect city signs and park in the appropriate locations on Nanton Avenue or on streets further south, or, if parking north of King Edward Avenue, on Alexandra Street or Laurier Avenue.

Staff and students are all encouraged to use alternative modes of travel. Staff park in underground and above ground parking facilities. Students are discouraged from driving to school.

There is no student parking at York House School. Students are encouraged to take the bus, ride their bikes, or walk. If a student is driving from a distance, they must park at least three blocks away from the school. There is no student parking on West 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Alexandra Street, or Nanton Street.

Parents and volunteers are provided with parking information that is posted to the school's website. Visitors are given information prior to their arrival.

In 2022, YHS, in consultation with residents on Nanton Avenue, placed temporary "sandwich board" signs near specific spots on Nanton between Granville and Alexandra streets. These are extra visual reminders for drivers to follow the City's no stopping and no parking signs.

The City has constructed a permanent pedestrian crossing on West 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue near Granville Street. This move included adding relevant signage and the removal of two parking spaces on the south side of West 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue so that cars cannot back up onto the crossing. The City also removed parking spaces further west on 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The School and residents agree this is not necessary and are working to communicate with the City.

**Alternate modes:** The exact timing is to be determined, but YHS plans to survey its parent and staff community to collect more recent data pertaining to transportation use and rising use of alternative modes such as walking, biking, carpooling and using transit thanks to incentives and programs in recent years. This would be part of upcoming strategic planning for the future.

**Work for future TMP:** Prior to the city granting approval for the rezoning in 2018, city staff summarised transportation-related recommendations ahead of the application coming before public hearing. These can be found at

<https://council.vancouver.ca/20180116/documents/phea8summary.pdf>

In late 2016, a transportation study was prepared for YHS by consultants in response to the proposed 2016-17 YHS Master Plan and rezoning application. This is the basis of the current transportation management plan and included a survey of existing transportation networks, operations, and plans for parking as well as assessing regular pick-up and drop-off habits. The transportation management plan encourages staff and students to use alternative modes of travel and gives incentives for carpooling, transit use, walking, and biking to school.

<https://rezoning.vancouver.ca/applications/4176alexandrast/documents/transportationstudyreduced.pdf>

**3. \*\*Facilities use** -- York House School campus at Alexandra Street and King Edward Avenue currently consists of a Junior School, Senior School, gymnasium. There are administration offices, a counselling centre, music teaching area and auditorium that are below grade.

The approved rezoning includes provisions for potential community use of future YHS facilities.

**School enrollment** on the main campus is currently 616 students. The approved 2018 rezoning allows YHS to increase this enrollment from a base of 600 students by 15 per cent over 15 years to a total of 690 students in order to expand program offerings. This enrollment number can fluctuate as students who register with the school may drop out just prior to school start-up or during the school year.

**School events** for the year, with dates and times, can be found on the homepage of the YHS website at [www.yorkhouse.ca](http://www.yorkhouse.ca). Some of the events drawing the largest number of attendees include the Welcome Back BBQ in September (about 300), Bid

Night in February (300 to 400), the drama production in March (up to 250), Grandparents Morning in April/May (250 to 350), Grade 12 Graduation in June (around 350), and parent/teacher conferences each term (200 to 250).

**School event hours** will not occur beyond 11:00 pm. Events held in the auditorium/gymnasium will end by 10:30 pm with the exception of dances held in the gym which will end by 11:00 pm. The school tries to schedule evening events to start after 6:00 pm so that attendees can park on arterial streets.

**School collaboration** will happen to minimize the overlap and conflict of major events. YHS will contact Little Flower Academy and Shaughnessy Elementary to coordinate event calendars.

**The auditorium** is primarily for educational and school-related purposes, including mainly student instruction, such as, but not limited to assemblies, music and drama teaching, full grade and multigrade lectures by staff and guest speakers, and professional development training sessions for staff. Some school events, as listed on the school website, would also use the auditorium.

**The gymnasium** is primarily used for indoor physical education, sports and athletics training, and practices and competitions.

Parents picking up students attending after school activities in the gymnasium are required to follow city signs in the area. They mainly use the King Edward Avenue lay-by. As part of its competitive sports program, YHS occasionally holds sports tournaments. Typically, school participants of these tournaments arrive in their own school vans and the visitors are accommodated on site. Parking information is provided to all participating schools. For events that may be larger, the school event parking guidelines will be in effect and participants will be requested to not park on local streets.

### **Spring Break/Summer community use**

There may be times when the school is utilised for educational or athletics camps during key break times when the school is not in operation. Any external group utilising our facilities will need to abide by traffic management protocols.

#### **4. \*\* Update on new initiatives and plans for next steps**

Neighbours have, in particular, raised concerns about traffic challenges around Nanton Avenue, including increased volume and speed of traffic along Granville Street near Nanton, and the potential impact of this when it comes to drivers/passengers parking/disembarking to make school drop-offs.

There is more traffic on Nanton itself, as well as in the north-south lane connecting West 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Nanton. Neighbours report that traffic has worsened since the City designated Nanton Avenue as a bike route.

In 2022, YHS, in consultation with residents on Nanton Avenue, placed temporary “sandwich board” signs near specific spots on Nanton between Granville and Alexandra streets as an extra visual reminder for drivers to follow the City’s no stopping and no parking signs.

To improve awareness of safety and traffic measures and spark a shift in culture around personal and individual responsibility, YHS also initiated a new communications plan in 2019 to go beyond regular written communication and verbal reminders by traffic guards, including both parent volunteers and paid, contracted staff.

In 2021, the School started a new initiative to improve the visibility of students in addition to educating them about being good pedestrians to reduce risk. Students are given reflectors for their backpacks and arm bands to wear on the outside of their jackets so they can be better seen on dark, rainy days. The school has been working to establish a culture of wearing these.

YHS has also engaged Constable Ryan Hooper of the Vancouver Police Department. He is the school’s safety traffic officer and is part of a working group that includes the VPD, the Vancouver School Board, and the City of Vancouver’s parking enforcement and engineering departments. After he highlighted the need for parents to be trained to do traffic duty, YHS arranged teaching workshops conducted by Constable Hooper for hundreds of parents and school administration staff on how to safely perform crossing guard duties. Constable Hooper said he would also be happy to meet with individual families. YHS also created two videos to support the training.

In 2019, the City of Vancouver installed speed bumps on Alexandra Street between King Edward Avenue and West 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The City has also added speed bumps on West 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Alexandra and Granville Street and a marked crossing zone on 26th Avenue just off Granville Street. The City also added more time to the pedestrian crossing at King Edward Avenue.

Both the speed bumps and increased pedestrian crossing time have helped improve the pace and flow of traffic from Alexandra and King Edward onto the lay-bys.

The City has constructed a permanent pedestrian crossing on West 26th Avenue near Granville Street. This move included adding relevant signage and the removal of two parking spaces on the south side of West 26th Avenue so that cars cannot back up onto the crossing. The City also removed parking spaces further west on the south side of 26th Avenue to Alexandra.

The School and residents agree this is not necessary and are committed to consulting with each other and working together to communicate their view to the City, which communicated in writing to the residents, via email in mid-April 2023, that it will remove the signs.